

REMEDICATION AND REDEVELOPMENT (RR) NEWS FROM WISCONSIN DNR  
August 27, 2003

RR PROGRAM BUDGET UPDATE

We have previously noted that the RR Program lost 7 permanent staff positions, mostly by eliminating vacant positions, due to the budget adjustment bill for the 2001-03 biennium. We've also said that the current state budget could further reduce RR Program staffing in two ways. One of these is the Legislature's decision to retain the current \$9 vehicle environmental impact fee, payable at vehicle title transfers, rather than approving the governor's proposed increase to \$10.50. The vehicle impact fee is one of the primary funding sources for several environmental programs in DNR and other agencies. The RR Program will feel the impacts of this Legislative action in the second year of the current biennium (state fiscal year 2005) with up to 13.5 staff positions affected. Another impact in 2005 is a reduction of over \$800,000 in funding to the "repair account" of the Environmental Fund. This reduction will impact financing for spill response, emergency actions (e.g. clean bottled water) and state-financed environmental cleanups at "orphan" landfills and other contaminated sites. In state fiscal year 2004, which began July 1, the impact to the RR Program comes from the Legislature's decision to move approximately \$1.3 million of state Environmental Fund money to the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Although Governor Doyle vetoed this transfer, the RR Program now has no authority to spend these funds. We are working to offset the immediate impact on 10 positions by using a new brownfields and state response grant from EPA that allows us to continue a number of program functions using federal funding. The new grant imposes some new requirements - one is to complete an extensive inventory of contaminated and potentially contaminated sites in Wisconsin. Other requirements include geo-location of additional contaminated sites and limited audits of sites that have been closed using institutional controls. The federal grant, however, does not protect RR staff from personnel changes in state fiscal year 2004 because other staffing reductions in DNR may result in experienced RR staff being "bumped" from their jobs by DNR staff with longer seniority. In summary, the RR Program has lost 7 staff positions, plans to use the new federal grant to delay by one fiscal year the loss of 10 additional positions, and anticipates loss of up to 13.5 additional positions in state fiscal year 2005. Please look for the September issue of "Re News", our quarterly newsletter, for more information about these budget impacts.

WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEB

We have updated our web pages devoted to financial assistance, including an improved chart with links to state and federal information on grants, reimbursement programs, loans and tax incentives for brownfield cleanups. We've also added some new information about federal brownfield grants and options for cancellation or assignment of delinquent property taxes at contaminated properties.  
<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/financial/index.htm> We have also updated our Brownfield Study Group information on the web at  
<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/bsg/index.htm>

#### COMMENT PERIOD FOR FEDERAL BROWNFIELD GRANTS

EPA offers three types of federal brownfield grants, providing high dollar amounts (\$200,000 to \$1 million) to successful applicants for environmental cleanup and redevelopment. The three grant types include assessment and planning, cleanup, and establishment of a revolving loan fund. Four Wisconsin communities, Oshkosh, Richland Center, Delavan and Milwaukee, were successful applicants for these grants in federal fiscal year 2003. On Monday, August 25, EPA announced the public comment period for their grant guidelines in federal fiscal year 2004. The deadline for public comments is September 8, 2003. For more information about the guidelines, please see the EPA web site at <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm>. For an overview of these federal grants, please see [http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/financial/federal\\_brfllds.html](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/financial/federal_brfllds.html).

#### PECFA SITES IN DNR DATABASE

We've taken a look at recent PECFA site numbers in the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS). BRRTS includes PECFA sites managed by both DNR and the Department of Commerce. Looking at the several years and the first part of 2003, here's what we see: New PECFA-eligible sites reported per calendar year

- 871 (1998)
- 413 (1999)
- 234 (2000)
- 241 (2001)
- 124 (2002)
- 20 (2003 to date)

PECFA-eligible sites closed per year (by both agencies)

- 854 (1998)
- 1,158 (1999)
- 961 (2000)
- 729 (2001)
- 863 (2002)
- 515 (2003 to date)

Total closed PECFA sites in BRRTS = 10,158

Total open PECFA sites in BRRTS = 2,921

Looking at the total numbers of open and closed sites, we see that 77% of the known PECFA sites have been cleaned up and the case files closed by DNR or the Department of Commerce. As we noted in the June 26, 2003 "RR News from DNR", 74% of the PECFA sites closed by DNR since January of 2000 used the natural attenuation closure provisions in Chapter NR 726, Wis. Admin. Code. These provisions allow natural attenuation of groundwater contamination to complete the cleanup after the state has formally approved the cleanup actions.

#### TRIBAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES ASSISTANCE HANDBOOK

The "Tribal Environmental and Natural Resources Assistance Handbook" is now available on EPA's web site. This handbook compiles sources of federal financial and technical assistance for tribes, with categories including air, water, plants and animals, toxic & hazardous waste, solid waste, pollution prevention, emergency preparedness and response, and environmental education. You can find the document at [www.epa.gov/indian/tribhand.htm](http://www.epa.gov/indian/tribhand.htm), or you may contact Tonya Fish at [fish.tonya@epa.gov](mailto:fish.tonya@epa.gov) or at 202-260-0769.

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